Since hunting also seldom provides
262 anything for the kitchen - the Barundi are poor hunters and,
[224] except for the Batwa, do not eat venison or if they do, only on exceptional occasions -- and since wild plants are seldom used for food, the menu is rather limited. The main food items for the whole of Urundi are bananas, beans, peas, sweet potatoes, and sorghum; all these are dried, ground, and prepared as mush. All the other things produced by the fields at different altitudes and in areas of different climate (see the chapter on agriculture, p. 48) play only a subordinate role.

It is true that when speaking to a European or a Muhutu the Batussi claim that they live only on milk, meat, and beer, but in reality they eat legumes, bananas, millet mush, and other foods exactly like the Bahutu. After all, not enough cattle are killed in the area to satisfy all the Batussi every day.
252 Except for meat, which, as has been mentioned, is almost always roasted on the spit, most dishes by far are cooked or stewed; only very few are fried in grease or oil as, for example, in the Tanganyika region where palm oil is plentiful.

262 As far as special rules concerning food are concerned,
264 I have discovered a number of food taboos connected with totemism and religious ideas (see p. 103). It is surprising that one never sees adults eating. They always take their meals inside the huts, the man together with his wife but apart from the children, and if they are ever caught at their meals, they stop and go away since the food would "not agree" with them if eaten in the presence of strangers. Of course, this is
262 not the case when they are traveling. In that case the force
261 of external circumstances often frees them from such considerations; yet conscientious or rigidly trained people, as most of the Batussi are, observe the custom so strictly even while traveling that they will go hungry rather than depart from it. When climbing the Karisimbi, for example, I had two young Batussi guides who, in spite of the extreme physical exertion involved, refused all the food I offered them and did not eat anything for two days because they did not have their customary mush and milk, nor did they accept anything from the people in my caravan.

539 Tulek' intõke. Let us leave (alone) the banana trees (their roots) (1).

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1. Times of want are unfortunately frequent among the Blacks owing to their lack of foresight. They till the soil only for their own personal consumption. If a crop is ruined by drought or too much rain, therefore, they run out of food. The narrator describes one of those famines and gives it the name of "that which caused bits and pieces of hoes to come out (of hiding)," no matter how worn, to be sold to blacksmiths. One would then attempt to buy food in neighboring provinces with those meager resources.

Reference is made to the roots of banana trees which are dried in the sun after being struck with the handle of a hoe in order to remove the potash. They are then crushed on the grain-grinding stone and furnish an indigestible food which does not satisfy and does not hinder the end, which is death, unless this imitation flour is mixed in with something more substantial.

Second Example

539 Akasigo ko gutur' umwami. A small literary piece (on how to address the king when offering gifts to him).

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irregular, dependent on circumstances—a good hunt or a generous reward for dancing and singing.

The Tutsi had a strictly controlled attitude towards solid food. They behaved as if the need for nourishment was, if not shameful, at least beneath their dignity. The taking of a meal was something to be done privately. Friends were offered beer or milk, but they were not asked to share a whole meal. When travelling the Tutsi were not supposed to eat solid food and if the journey did not exceed two or even three days, they very often actually did not eat. It is said that a true Tutsi subsists only on milk and beer and some old men take pride in boasting of it. This attitude towards solid food might be explained as an attempt on the part of the conquering pastoralists to stress their independence of the foodstuffs produced by and characteristic of commoners and on a deeper level as an affirmation of what we might term a fundamental difference between themselves and Hutu. The Tutsi, according to their legends, came from another world. They were human beings like the Hutu, but not in quite the same way. This interpretation of the Tutsi attitude to food is supported by their emphasis on greediness in the Hutu character, and gluttony in the Twa. In most of the tales in which Hutu appeared, they were conspicuous by their overeating. For the Twa this feature was still more stressed. Another fact significant in this respect was the very strong prohibition on Hutu servants attending the meals of their Tutsi masters to reveal what they ate. This prohibition was magically sanctioned.

4. CLOTHING AND SHELTER

In the highlands, especially during the rainy season and at night, adequate covering against cold and damp is needed. Boys and girls, however, go completely naked as long as they are *abana* (children), that is up to the age of eight or nine for girls and ten or eleven for boys. As children usually do not go very far from the compounds, they may find some protection against cold either inside the hut or by picking up a skin or blanket. But the great number of diseases of the respiratory organs among children is a sign of their inadequate protection against bad weather.

The traditional Twa garment was a sheep skin. The Hutu wore bark-cloth as a sort of skirt from the waist down to the knees.